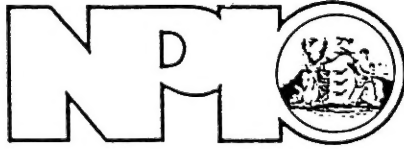


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## Press Release:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### JAMES ANNOUNCES SUPPORT FOR STATE CAR BURGLAR ALARM BILL

Newark Mayor Sharpe James has announced his support for a measure before the New Jersey state legislature that, if enacted, would require "newly manufactured passenger cars to be equipped with anti-theft devices beginning with the 1992 model year."

The legislation, sponsored by State Senator Ronald L. Rice, is intended to combat the high number of auto thefts in New Jersey. In 1987, more than 59,000 cars were stolen in the state, according to the "New Jersey Uniform Crime Report." On the average, one car was stolen every nine minutes.

If State Senator Rice's bill is approved, New Jersey would be the first state in the nation to require that all new cars be factory-equipped with anti-theft devices.

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"In January, I called for the State Legislature to put New Jersey in the forefront of this pioneering effort to fight car thefts," said James. "I congratulate Senator Rice for taking the initiative in sponsoring this vital legislation.

"I strongly urge that the State Legislature give immediate consideration to State Senator Rice's bill and bring about the prompt passage of this important measure."

Because of his concern, James also contacted the three U.S. automakers in January asking that they begin installing burglar alarms as standard equipment on all cars beginning with the 1990 model year.

The bill would prohibit the sale or lease in New Jersey of any passenger automobile manufactured during the 1992 model year or a later year unless the vehicle is equipped with a "passive anti-theft device." The bill defines a passive anti-theft device as "any device or system, approved by the Director of the Division of Motor Vehicles, which automatically causes an alarm or ignition cut-off when the motor of the vehicle is turned off."

Under the bill, any car manufactured for the 1992 model year or any following year without a passive anti-theft device will not be allowed to be registered in the State of New Jersey.

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It would be the responsibility of the Director of the Division of Motor Vehicles to develop the rules and regulations needed to enforce the anti-theft act, and to announce these rules and regulations to the public.

The penalties for "any person who violates the prohibition against selling, offering to sell or leasing a passenger automobile for the 1992 model year or any model year thereafter which is not equipped with an anti-theft device" to someone who must register that vehicle in the State of New Jersey would be a fine of no more than \$500 and no less than \$200.

In his January letter to General Motors, Ford Motor Company and Chrysler Motors, Mayor James wrote: "The auto theft problem in America, especially in urban areas has reached critical proportions. As a result, insurance rates have increased and innocent bystanders continue to be killed in accidents caused by teenagers fleeing from police in stolen vehicles."

James told the Detroit automakers that programs intended to discipline juvenile car thieves have failed and that the only solution to this problem was for the manufacturers "to begin installing burglar alarm systems as standard equipment on all automobiles coming off their assembly lines."

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Mayor James decided on this approach following a community forum sponsored by Councilmen-at-large Ralph T. Grant and Gary S. Harris and South Ward Councilman Donald Bradley. It was the concensus of those at the forum the situation warranted federal and state legislative action.

"In the meantime," James said, "the only solution is for automakers to voluntarily begin a program of installing burglar alarms as standard equipment."

On Monday (March 20) the Newark Police Department will hold a day-long "Comprehensive Auto Theft Prevention Conference," starting at 9:30 a.m. in the Paul Robeson Center of Rutgers University.